POL 14 VIET S

INCOMING TELEGRAM Department of State

UNCLASSIFIED

48
Action
E
Info
SS
G
SP
SAE
L
H
IO
P
TSIA
NSC
INR
CIA
NSA
DOD
ID
ASR

024808

1966 SEP 27 PM 1 35

VV EUA907TEA344
RR RUEHC
DE RUMSEM 7013 2701205
ZNR UUUUU
R 271000Z SEP 66
FM AMEMBASSY SAIGON
TO SECSTATE WASSHDC
STATE GRNC
BT
UNCLAS SAIGON 7013

SEPT 27

SUBJ: CONSTITUENT ASSEMBLY: VIEWS OF DEPUTIES VO THUONG KINH AND LY VAN HIEP

1. SEPTEMBER 23 EDITION VIET NAM PRESS (VIETNAMESE) CARRIED INTERVIEW OF VO TUONG KINH, DEPUTY FROM PHU YEN PROVINCE. IN REPLY TO QUESTION ON WHAT LINE OF ACTION HE WILL PURSUE IN CA, HIEP SAID, "WE WILL STRIVE TO CREATE A PRESIDENTIAL SYSTEM BUT WITH CONSTITUTIONAL LIMITATIONS ON THE PRESIDENT TO PREVENT RECURRENCE OF DICTATORIAL REGIME SUCH AS NGO DINH

PAGE 2 RUMSEM 7013 UNCLAS
DIEM'S....THERE SHOULD BE SEPARATION OF POWERS AN FREE AND INDEPENDENT JUDICIARY...PRESIDENT SHOULD BE ELECTED BY DIRECT POPULAR VOTE."

2. SAME EDITION VIET NAM PRESS RECORDS INTERVIEW OF LAWYER LY VAN HIEP, ALSO DEPUTY FROM PHU YEN. HIEP'S REMARKS DO NOT CONTAIN ANY SPECIFIC CONSTITUTIONAL PROPOSALS. HE DOES, HOWEVER, STATE THAT NEW CONSTITUTION SHOULD NOT BE IMITATION OF ANY FOREIGN DOCUMENT AND PROPER ACCOUNT SHOULD BE TAKEN OF FACT THAT MOST OF VIET NAM'S POPULATION MADE UP OF POOR WORKERS, FARMERS, SOLDIERS, SMALL BUSINESSMEN AND ORDINARY CIVIL SERVANTS. "DIGNITY AND RIGHTS OF THESE PEOPLE MUST BE RESPECTED."
LODGE
BT

(1)

DEPARTMENT OF STATE A/CDC/MR
REVIEWED BY Ivan Izenberg DATE 10/5/81
RDS ☐ or XDS ☐ EXT. DATE
TS AUTH. REASON(S)
ENDORSE EXISTING MARKINGS ☐
DECLASSIFIED ☐ RELEASABLE ☑
RELEASE DENIED ☐
PA or FOI EXEMPTIONS

UNCLASSIFIED

UNCLASSIFIED

INCOMING TELEGRAM Department of State

ACTION COPY

519

SECRET

Action
55
Info

NNNNVZCZCMJA445JIA583
PP RUEHC
DE RUMJIR 16000 0190641
ZNY SSSSS
P 190630Z JAN 67
FM AMEMBASSY SAIGON
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY
STATE GRNC
BT
S E C R E T SAIGON 16000

015043

1967 JAN 19 AM 2 41

SAIGON 16000 1-1967

POL 14 VIET S

E X D I S

1. I VISITED GENERAL THIEU, WHO TOLD ME ABOUT PROGESS TOWARDS A CONSTITUTION, SAYING THAT WORKING GROUPS REPRESENTING THE GVN AND THE CONSTITUENT ASSEMBLY WERE WORKING CLOSE TOGETHER AT THE INDEPENDENCE PALACE WITH A GREAT DEAL OF AGREEMENT AND AN EXCELLENT "TONE" TO THE PROCEEDINGS.

2. HE BELIEVED THAT AFTER THE CONSTITUTION HAD BEEN PROMULGATED THE MEMBERS OF THE CONSTITUENT ASSEMBLY WOULD SERVE INDIVIDUALLY AS A SORT OF AN ELECTORAL COMMISSION TO DEVISE THE PROCEDURES FOR HOLDING THE ELECTION FOR PRESIDENT.

3. THERE WOULD BE A PROVISION IN THE CONSTITUTION (#) COUNCIL TO ADVISE THE PRESIDENT ON MILITARY MATTERS. THIS, HE SAID, WOULD BE ONE WAY IN WHICH THE MILITARY WOULD BE RECOGNIZED

PAGE TWO RUMJIR 16000 S E C R E T
IN THE NEW GOVERNMENT. ANOTHER WAY, OF COURSE, WOULD BE FOR MILITARY MEN TO TAKE OFF THEIR UNIFORMS AND BE CANDIDATES.

4. WHEN I ASKED HIM ABOUT PRESIDENTIAL CANDIDATES, HE SAID THAT THE PERSONS WHOSE NAMES WERE HEARD MENTIONED WERE SUU, DAN DON, HUONG, THANH AND THEN "THE TWO MILITARY ONES," THIEU AND KY. HE FELT THAT HUONG AND THANH HAD THE LEAST CHANCE.

5. I ASKED HIM WHETHER HE THOUGHT THESE SEVEN NAMES WOULD ALL BE PRINTED ON THE BALLOT, POINTING OUT THAT IF THIS HAPPENED IT WOULD BE NOT ONLY IMPOSSIBLE FOR ANY ONE MAN TO GET A MAJORITY, BUT IT WOULD BE VERY DIFFICULT TO GET A PLURALITY OF ANY SIGNIFICANT SIZE.

SECRET

DECLASSIFIED

6. WITHOUT GIVING ME A DIRECT ANSWER TO MY QUESTION, HE MADE IT CLEAR THAT THOUGHT IS BEING GIVEN AS TO HOW A MULTICIPLICITY OF CANDIDACIES CAN BE WHITTLED DOWN. ONE METHOD BEING DISCUSSED IS THAT NO CANDIDATE'S NAME COULD GO ON THE BALLOT UNLESS A CERTAIN NUMBER OF DEPUTIES IN THE CONSTITUENT ASSEMBLY WERE TO SIGN WHAT IN EFFECT WOULD BE A NOMINATION PAPER.

7. HE THEN SAID THAT TO GET ANYTHING DONE IN VIET-NAM, IT WAS NECESSARY TO HAVE : A) THE SUPPORT OF THE MILITARY; B) THE SUPPORT OF THE VIETNAMESE PEOPLE; AND C) THE SUPPORT OF THE AMERICANS. THERE WAS MUCH TALK, HE SAID, THAT THE AMERICANS WERE SUPPORTING SUU AND DAN. I SAID THAT I THOUGHT I WAS IN A POSITION TO KNOW, AND THAT THE AMERICANS, MEANING THE UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT, IS NOT SUPPORTING ANYONE.

8. I AGREED WITH HIM THAT THE PROMULGATION OF A CONSTITUTION AND THE ELECTION OF A PRESIDENT WERE A BEGINNING, AND THAT IT WAS IMPORTANT TO HAVE MEN IN THESE HIGH OFFICES WHO COULD COMMAND THE CONFIDENCE OF THE PEOPLE AND MOVE THE COUNTRY AHEAD.

9. ON ARTICLE 21, HE AGREED WITH ME THAT IF THE CONSTITUTION WAS A SATISFACTORY DOCUMENT, AS HE BELIEVED IT WOULD BE, THIS PROVISION WOULD BE A DEAD LETTER.

10. ALTOGETHER HIS REPORT ON CONSTITUTION-MAKING WAS A REPORT OF PROGRESS.

11. AS I WAS LEAVING, HE BROUGHT UP THE MATTER OF THE REVAMPING OF THE ARVN, AND SAID THAT HE WAS MAKING A SYSTEMATIC TOUR OF THE COUNTRY, SPEAKING TO THE OFFICERS WHEREVER HE WENT AND STRESSING THE ABSOLUTELY VITAL NATURE OF THIS JOB WHICH ONLY THE VIETNAMESE COULD DO. HE STRESSED THE IMPORTANCE OF WORKING CLOSELY WITH THE DISTRICT AND PROVINCE CHIEFS AND THE IMPORTANCE OF PROMOTING OFFICERS ON THE BASIS OF THEIR WORK IN PACIFICATION AND NOT ON THE BASIS OF HOW MANY VIET CONG THEY HAD KILLED OR HOW MANY GUNS AND VIET CONG WEAPONS THEY HAD SEIZED. HE NEGATED REPORTS WHICH I HAD HEARD OF SUBBORN RESISTANCE TO USING THE ARVN IN THIS WAY. HE DID NOT FIND RESISTANCE, BUT FOUND A LACK OF UNDERSTANDING. WITH UNDERSTANDING, HE THOUGHT THE PROGRAM WOULD REALLY MOVE.
LODGE
BT

NOTE: ADVANCE COPY TO S/S-O AT 3:44 A.M. JANUARY 19, 1967

PASSED WHITE HOUSE, DOD, CIA, 1/19/67 - 3:44 A.M.

(#) OMISSION. CORRECTION TO FOLLOW.

DECLASSIFIED

POL 14 VIET-S

30 INCOMING TELEGRAM Department of State REF VIET

520

7

CONFIDENTIAL

Action EA

Info SS GPM SP SC SAH L H IO P USIA NSC INR CIA NSA DOD AID SR SCA ORM RSR

VZCZCMJA589JIA915 024748

RR RUEHC 1967 JAN 29 AM 2 10

DE RUMJIR 16679 0290530

ZNY CCCCC

R 290430Z JAN 67

FM AMEMBASSY SAIGON

TO SECSTATE WASHDC

STATE GRNC

BT

C O N F I D E N T I A L SAIGON 16679

REF: STATE 125017

SUBJ: VILLAGE/HAMLET ELECTIONS.

1. ACCORDING TO INFORMATION SO FAR AVAILABLE FROM SPECIAL COMMISSARIAT FOR ADMINSTRATION (SCA), REFUGEES WILL BE PERMITTED TO VOTE IN 1967 NATIONAL AND VILLAGE/HAMLET ELECTIONS IF THEY ARE LOCATED IN AREAS WHERE ELECTIONS ARE HELD, JUST AS THEY WERE IN CONSTITUENT ASSEMBLY ELECTIONS LAST SEPT. THERE IS NO LENGTH OF RESIDENCE REQUIREMENT FOR VOTERS IN LOCAL ELECTIONS, AND THEREFORE REFUGEES SHOULD BE ABLE TO VOTE WITHOUT RESTRICTION. CANDIDATES FOR VILLAGE COUNCIL HAMLET CHIEF OR DEPUTY HAMLET CHIEF MUST HAVE RESIDED IN VILLAGE FOR ONE YEAR PRIOR TO DATE OF FILING. REFUGEES WILL FOR THE MOST PART BE PARTICIPATING

PAGE TWO RUMJIR 16679 C O N F I D E N T I A L

IN ELECTIONS IN ESTABLISHED VILLAGES AND HAMLETS. THERE IS NO TABULATION OF ADMINISTRATIVE UNITS(VILLAGES OR HAMLETS) CREATED IN PREVIOUSLY UNPOPULATED AREAS WHERE REFUGEES HAVE BEEN SETTLED, BUT PRESUMABLY VILLAGE/HAMLET ELECTIONS WILL BE AUTHORIZED IN SUCH AREAS IF SECURITY PERMITS. IN FORTHCOMING MISSION GUIDANCE ON ADVISORY ROLE IN SUPPORT OF ELECTIONS, OCO PROV REPS AND MACV SECTOR ADVISORS WILL BE INSTRUCTED TO ADVISE THAT ELECTIONS BE ORGANIZED IN ALL POSSIBLE LOCALITIES.

2

2. MEANWHILE SCA HAS PUBLISHED ADMINISTRATIVE INSTRUCTIONS FOR IMPLEMENTATION OF DECREES ON LOCAL ADMINISTRATIVE REFORM AND LOCAL ELECTTIONS. TIMETABLE CALLS FOR PHASING OF ELECTIONS IN EACH PROVINCE: 30 PERCENT OF VILLAGES IN EACH PROVINCE ARE TO ELECT

CONFIDENTIAL

Saigon 16679

R

DECLASSIFIED

COUNCILS ON APR 2; 30 PERCENT ON APR 9; 20 PERCENT ON APR 16; 10 PERCENT ON APR 23; AND 10 PERCENT ON APR 30. (LATTER TWO PHASES CAN BE COMBINED ON EITHER DATE). SIMILARLY, 30 PERCENT OF HAMLETS IN EACH PROVINCE ARE TO ELECT HAMLET CHIEFS (AND WHERE APPLICABLE, DEPUTY HAMLET CHIEFS) ON MAY 14;

30 PERCENT ON MAY 21; 20 PERCENT ON MAY 28; 10 PERCENT ON JUNE 4; AND 10 PERCENT ON JUNE 11, WITH SAME OPTION FOR COMBINATION OF LAST TWO PHASES ON EITHER OF DATES GIVEN. PRESUMED ADVANTAGE OF THIS PLAN IS THAT SECURITY FORCES CAN BE CONCENTRATED TO PROTECT ELECTIONS FROM VIET CONG DISRUPTION ATTEMPTS.

3. IN MOST OTHER RESPECTS LOCAL ELECTIONS WILL RESEMBLE CONSTITUENT ASSEMBLY ELECTIONS. (TRANSLATIONS OF TWO DECREES AND ADMINISTRATIVE INSTRUCTIONS WILL BEPOUCHED TO DEPT UNDER COVER AIRGRAM BY FEB 1.)

LODGE
BT

DECLASSIFIED